CLAIMS

1. A method for treating or preventing cardiovascular or cerebrovascular disease, comprising administering an agent that binds a sphingolipid or a sphingolipid metabolite.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein said agent is an antibody or antibody derivative.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein said agent is a non-catalytic derivative of an enzyme involved in the sphingolipid metabolic pathways.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein said agent is a soluble fragment of a receptor that binds a sphingolipid.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein said sphingolipid or a sphingolipid metabolite is selected from the group consisting of sphingomyelin, sphingosine, S-1-P, ceramide, SPC, 3-ketosphinganine, galactosylceramide and dihydroceramide.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein said sphingolipid is selected from the group consisting of ceramide, sphingosine and S-1-P.

7. The method of claim 4 wherein said sphingolipid is S-1-P.

8. The method of claim 7 wherein said receptor is selected from the group consisting of Edg-1, Edg-3, Edg-5, Edg-6, Edg-8, the Mil receptor, AXOR29, NRG1, SCaMPER and homologs and isoforms thereof.

9. The method of claim 7, wherein said receptor is an Edg receptor.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein said Edg receptor is rat edg-3 receptor encoded by a nucleic acid having the sequence SEQ ID NO:7

11. The method of claim 10, wherein said receptor is a SCaMPER.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein said SCaMPER is encoded by a nucleic acid selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:3 and SEQ ID NO:4.

13. A method for treating or preventing cardiovascular or cerebrovascular disease, comprising administering an agent that binds a receptor of a sphingolipid or a sphingolipid metabolite.

14. The method of claim 13 wherein said agent is an antibody or antibody derivative.

15. The method of claim 13 wherein said agent is selected from the group consisting of a sphingolipid, a sphingolipid metabolite, and a sphingolipid analog.

16. The method of claim 13 wherein said receptor is selected from the group consisting of Edg-1, Edg-3, Edg-5, Edg-6, Edg-8, the Mil receptor, AXOR29, NRG1, SCaMPER and homologs and isoforms thereof.

17. The method of claim 13, wherein said receptor is an Edg receptor.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein said Edg receptor is rat edg-3 receptor encoded by a nucleic acid having the sequence SEQ ID NO:7

19. The method of claim 13, wherein said receptor is a SCaMPER.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein said SCaMPER is encoded by a nucleic acid selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:3 and SEQ ID NO:4.